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No. 3.

SELECTIONS FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE OF
COLONEL CLEMENT BIDDLE.

(Continued from page 162.)

Tobias Lear to Col. Biddle.

New York September 19th. 1790

Dear Sir,

I have been duly favored with your letter of the 14th Inst. Since which I have been informed by M^r. Morris that by the first of next month I may have the furniture removed; as by that time there will be room ready to receive it; and it can be properly distributed when the alterations are completed:—

I thank you, my dear Sir, for the information you have been so good as to obtain, and give me respecting the Packets. I think eighty dollars, which is about one dollar per ton, for the largest packet, is reasonable. And I must further encroach on your goodness, in requesting you to engage her to take a freight to Philadelphia at that price. She must be here certainly by the first of October, and if one or two days sooner it might be better. She can come to a wharf within a few Rods of the house, and shall have her loading as fast as it will be possible to stow it away. As there are many things that must be handled with care in stowing &c. I

shall let some of our own people be on board to assist therein, as they know the Boxes containing the delicate articles. She may, if the weather permits, be loaded in two days, if she can be stowed in that time. We shall have everything in perfect readiness, and all the furniture that is liable to be injured packed in cases. There will be many things which may go on deck; and we shall send all our Servants in her (4 men and 4 or 5 women).—If you engage this vessel I think it might be well to have some written agreement with the owner, lest any circumstance should occur to occasion a misunderstanding in the matter. I believe it will hardly be necessary to engage two Packets; for upon the best judgement I can form, it appears probable that the Packet which carries 800 bbls, must take all, or nearly all our things. If any should remain they can be sent by some other vessel. Should you not be able to get the largest, then I would wish the next in size and goodness might be taken.—

with very great respect & esteem

I am D^r. Sir.

Your most Obed^t. S^t.

Clement Biddle Esq^r.

Tobias Lear.

Tobias Lear to Col. Biddle.

New York September 24th. 1790.

Dear Sir,

I have been duly favored with your letter of the 22^d. Before I had received your letter of the 14th. Inst. I made inquiry of the only Coaster between this place and Philad^a., that was then in New York, to know at what rate he would take a freight for me to Philad^a. and he demanded 150 dollars for his vessel, about 75 tons.—when I received the information which you were so good as to send me, I thought 80 dollars remarkably low. But the error accounts for it. From everything I can learn, it appears probable that I shall not be able

to get a vessel of the size of Captⁿ. Albertsons for less than 160 dollars, I will, therefore, be much obliged to you to engage her at that rate.—we shall have many things to carry on deck and I shall find provisions for the Servants who will go in the Cabin which (by the way) is undoubtedly included in the agreement; for there are many things which are necessary to be put there.

If the Vessel sails from Phil^a. on Sunday next, she will, in all probability, be here by the first of October. But as she *may* be detained much beyond that period, either by not sailing so soon as is expected—by being long on her passage, or delay after she gets here; I shall, in that case be subjected to a very great inconvenience; and should therefore chuse to fix a day for the vessel to take in her cargo, beyond which, if she was not here and ready, I would not consider myself obliged to wait for her; for there will undoubtedly be many ready to engage whenever we are prepared for them. The latest day I should be inclined to fix on would be Monday the 4th of October; and if it should be sooner than that, it would be more agreeable, as we shall be in perfect readiness by the first.— I will therefore, thank you, my dear Sir, to engage Captⁿ. Albertson's largest vessel upon these conditions.— If she is not ready to receive her cargo by the 4th of October, I shall not feel myself *obliged* to take her after that time; but will be left at liberty to engage any one I please.— I think it might be best to have an agreement in writing just expressive of the sense of the Parties.—

As I know your disposition to oblige the President in anything in your power, I venture to give this trouble; w^h. otherwise I should hardly presume to do.—

With very great esteem

I am D^r. Sir,

Y^r. most Obed^t. Serv^t.

Clement Biddle Esq^r.

Tobias Lear.

Tobias Lear to Col. Biddle.

New York, October 3^d. 1790.

Dear Sir,

I have been duly favored with your letter of the 27th Ultimo. and this morning Captain Albertson handed me your favor of the 23^d.

One hundred and sixty dollars is the lowest Captain Albertson will take for his vessel; and this exclusive of the Cabin, which he says was never comprehended in his conversation with you; and that it is always considered as separate from the vessel when a vessel is hired, unless particularly specified. This is different from the custom of this and all other places in the United States where I am acquainted—it may, however be the custom of Philadelphia—The Cabin I considered as essential part of the vessel, not only for the Servants of which there will be 9 or 10, but to put such particular things as might be better there than in the hold. And sure I am, from your letter of the 27th., that you understood the Cabin as included in the vessel for 160 dollars.— He says he should not object to some small things being put into the Cabin; but he shall charge 2 dollars for each passenger, I finding provisions.— He even made some objections to my occupying the deck of the Vessel—saying that he only mentioned the *hold* to you. This, however, he gave up. I have therefore agreed to give him 160 dollars for the hold and deck of the vessel, and if I occupy the Cabin to pay him accordingly.— He will begin to take in on Tuesday, and in all probability will sail by the last of the week.—

M^{rs} Lear & myself set out for Philadelphia as soon as the vessel sails, and as we shall be obliged to take lodgings till the furniture arrives, I will be much obliged to you, my dear Sir, if you will engage them for us at M^{rs}. House's—or, if she cannot accommodate us, at some

other good house near to the President's—we shall have a man & woman servant with us, but it is not likely we shall be under the necessity of continuing in lodgings but a few days.

with very great respect & esteem

I am Dear Sir,

Your most Ob^t. Serv^t.

Clement Biddle Esquire—

Tobias Lear.

Tobias Lear to Col. Biddle.

Dear Sir,

Shall I beg the favor of you to obtain from M^{rs}. Pine the following information for me; viz— Her price of board per year for young Ladies at her School, with or without bed, washing &c— The several branches which are taught & their prices.— The number—names, ages, and places of abode of the several young Ladies now attending her School.

The reason of my giving you this trouble, my dear Sir, is, that I may be able to give information to the President on the above points;—and he does not wish anything to come *directly* from him, lest it should raise an expectation of a Scholar from his family—which expectation would not be realized unless the terms and other circumstances should meet his approbation.—

I shall write to the President tomorrow forenoon & wish to make this a part of my letter. I would have done myself the pleasure to call upon you this evening with the above request; but have been prevented by indispensable business.— Your goodness forbids any apology for this trouble.—

Mrs. Lear's and my Compliments to M^{rs}. Biddle.

I am D^r. Sir

respectfully & sincerely

Y^{rs}.

Clem^t. Biddle Esq^r.

Tobias Lear.

Saturday Evening—Nov. 6th 1790.

Tobias Lear to Col. Biddle.

Circular.

Philadelphia July 14th 1791.

Sir,

The President of the United States commands me to request that you will be so good, when you make your official return to him of the enumeration of the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania, as to favor him with the number of souls in each County and *Town* within your District, where the number of the Town can be separated from the number of the County in which it may be.

As this particular return is merely to gratify the private curiosity of the President, he desires you may transmit it to him either when you make your general return, or at any other time that may be convenient to you.

I have the honor to be
very respectfully

Sir,

Your most Obed^t. Serv^t.

Tobias Lear.

Secretary to the President
of the United States.

Clement Biddle Esquire
Marshall of the District
of Pennsylvania

Washington to Col. Biddle.

Mount Vernon 8th April 1798

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 25th. Ult^o. is before me, but I have not yet heard of the arrival of Capt^a. Tice at Alexandria.—

Not being able to wait any longer for Oznabrigs, I have made the purchase of what I stood in need of, in Alexandria—further enquiry therefore after this ar-

ticle, and the price of it, may be discontinued by you, in Philadelphia, on my account.—

The Bills for the other articles, purchased by you, with the a/c current, have been received.— By the latter, a balance of \$138.38 appears against me; but as interest on my Certificates became due the first of this month, and you will have a Coach and other things to sell, belonging to me, I have not remitted it.

About the middle of August, the term for which my present Miller is engaged, will expire; and it is not probable it will be renewed, as he is not, in the first place, though a pretty good Miller, the most industrious man in the world; and in the 2^d place, requires an increase of Wages.—

His present wages & allowance of Provisions are:—\$166½ per ann., the first.—the 2^d ample, but specified.—a cow is allowed to afford milk, and wood is furnished and laid at his door;—the house is comfortably large and a Garden adjoining to it.—In short I do not see that any convenience is wanting that a person in that line can reasonably require.

The Mr Lewis's, formerly, have aided me in procuring Millers; perhaps they can recommend one now.—Mr. Oliver Evans is much in that line, to him I have wrote, as he is acquainted with my mill, having fixed some of her Works and understanding that he lives in Philad^a., I leave the letter open for your perusal before delivery, wishing you to converse with him as well as the Mr. Lewis's on the subject of it, & inform me of the result.

My enquiries, as you will perceive, go no further at present than to discover a *fit* character, who would be willing to engage on the terms here mentioned, & could be here by the middle of Aug^t. with esteem—I am Dear Sir Y^r. Obed Serv^t.

G^o. Washington.

Col^o. Clem^t. Biddle.

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Washington to Col. Biddle.

Mount Vernon 29th July 1798.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 9th ult^o. (to which I replied on the 17th. following) is the last I have received from you.— And nothing more have I heard of the Pictures from Mr. Savage, & the last Vol^o. of the Encyclopedia which you say you were then about to ship in a Vessel loading for Alexandria.—

For my sentiments respecting the old Coach, & Table ornaments, I refer to my last of the above date—17th June—& repeat my request of a picture frame of the quality & size therein mentioned

With esteem & regard

I am—Dear Sir

Your Obed^t. Servant

Col^o. Clem^t. Biddle,

G^o. Washington.

William Jones to Col. Biddle.

Health Office 17th. Sep^r. 1798.

Dear Sir

I received your favor of the 14th. with the enclosure from General Washington cont^g. a generous donation of \$200 for the relief of our suffering poor; accompanied with those amiable and humane sentiments, which he so well knows how to express—

On behalf of the Board of Managers

I am Dear Sir Yours very respectfully

Clement Biddle Esq^r. Wm Jones, President.

Washington to Col. Biddle.

Mount Vernon 23^d Jan: 1799.

Dear Sir,

In my last, written to you a few days ago, I intended, but forgot it, to enquire what price flour & Wheat bore in your Market.—

I would thank you for giving these in your next.— There used to be the prices current in one of the Gazettes of Philadelphia—which, tho' a very useful thing, seems to be discontinued.— Let me pray you therefore, when at any time you may have occasion to write to me, to mention the price of the above articles & whether they are likely to rise or fall.—

As a Farmer, Wheat & Flour constitute my principal concerns—it behoves me therefore to dispose of them upon the best terms.— I am, Dear Sir

Your most Obed^t. Servant
G^o. Washington.

Col^o. Clem Biddle.

Washington to Col. Biddle.

Mount Vernon 1st Feb. 1799.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 27th. ult^o. was received last night.— As the whole quantity of Blue-grass seed was purchased before my last letter to you got to hand, it may be sent on without diminution.

Let it be accompanied, if to be had, fresh and good, with twelve pounds of White clover seed—and the like quantity of Lucern.— You will remark how pointed I am with respect to the *goodness & quality* of the seeds I buy—the reason is, that no imposition upon a Farmer is felt so sorely as that of foul & defective seeds; because it deranges a whole system, besides occasioning the loss of a year in his plans

If Captⁿ. Ellwood would heave to when off my house; —or send a Boat ashore, which would be more certain, I would send off my Boat w^{ch}. would bring the Book-cases without delay.— I am—D^r. Sir

Y^r. Obed^t.

G^o. Washington.

Col^o. C. Biddle.

Washington to Col. Biddle.

Mount Vernon Feb^y. 18th. 1799.

Dear Sir

Your letter and a/c current, with the Bills enclosed, have been duly received;—and under cover of this letter I send you one hundred Dollars to be placed to my Credit.—

Ellwood has not yet called upon me, nor is he arrived at Alexandria that I have heard of.—

I thank you for the information respecting the price of Flour; and shall be obliged by your mentioning of it occasionally.—especially if the event you alluded to should cause a rise, or depression according to the issue.—

I am, Dear Sir

Your most Obed^t. H^{ble}. Serv^t.

P. S.

G^o. Washington.

Remember the Lucerne and white Clover seeds, written for in my last letter.

Washington to Col. Biddle.

Mount Vernon 21st April 1799

Dear Sir,

Your letters of the 21st. of March and 11th instant are both before me.—

By the first it appears that you had shipped by Captⁿ. Hand for Alexandria, on my a/c, 12 lbs. of white Clover seed and the like quantity of Lucerne, but none has been delivered by him at the Custom house or elsewhere that I can discover, which is a considerable disappointment to me; for depending thereon I enquired for no other;—and now, the season for sowing them is too far advanced to go in pursuit of any, elsewhere.—

I am obliged to you for shipping, by Ellwood, the Packages deposited at the Custom H^o. in Phil^a. for me. — I presume they were rec'd. there from the George

Barclay from the East Indies, if so, they contain seeds & exotics from that Country—and ought now, to be in the ground.

With esteem & regard—I am D^r. Sir
Your Obed^t.

Col^o. Biddle.

G^o. Washington.

What are the present prices of Flour and Wheat in Philadelphia?

Washington to Col. Biddle.

Dear Sir

Mount Vernon 13th Nov^m. 1799.

You will perceive by the enclosed Invoice & Bill of Lading, that two Pipes of old Madeira Wine, & two Boxes of Citron have been shipped by Charles Alder and C^o. for my use, on Board the Ship Lavinia, James Cook Mas^r., bound for Philadelphia.—

As the *original* letter, enclosing these papers, has been received (via Philadelphia) It is presumed that the wine is safe in that Port.— I have to request the favour of you, therefore, to receive these things;— Pay the freight and Duty;—and to forward them by a *safe* conveyance to me.— The amount of cost shall be paid so soon as you shall advise me of it.—

At the same time that you send the Wine, forward, I pray you, one hundred or one hundred and fifty pounds of best Moco Coffee—a small chest of the finest Tea—say about 25 lbs.—and two boxes of Spirmaciti candles.

Let me know at what clover seed sells—and whether *good* Lucern seed can be had?— Neither this kind of Seed, the White Clover or Blue grass seeds with which you furnished me this Spring, was worth the freight;—little or none of it came up.— Add if you please, the present prices of Wheat & Flour; and continue to mention them in your letters thereafter.

In September last, I enclosed M^r. Jos- [torn] Anthony a check on the Bank of Pennsylvania for \$56 in

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discharge of my subscription for M^r. John Trumbulls Prints; and requested, when he received the money to send me a receipt therefore; since which I hav^e. heard nothing from him, I take the liberty of putting the enclosed letter for M^r. Anthony, under cover to you, that I may learn what has become of the former & the check. — With very great esteem & regard I remain

Dear Sir

Your most Obedient Servant

Col^o. Clem^t. Biddle.

G^o. Washington.

Washington to Col. Biddle.

Mount Vernon 24th. Nov^r. 1799.

Dear Sir

A considerable time ago, in consequence of some applications from officers of Cavalry to know in what manner they were to draw pay, I wrote to the Secretary of War on the subject; & received for answer—that as no Paymaster was appointed to that Corps, they were to draw on the Paymaster General.—

M^r. Custis (cornet in the Light Dragoons) being one of those alluded to, above, drew an order, as he informs me on the Paymaster General in your favour; but is yet without the money (of which he is a good deal in want).— I pray you therefore to inform him, or me, wherein lays the difficulty of obtaining it from the Paymaster General, that I may apprise the Secretary of War thereof.—

When you inform me of the prices of those seeds which were ennumerated in my last—please to add to them that of Timothy seed also, by the Bushel.— With much esteem & regard—I am

Dear Sir

 At what price could Your Obed^t. H^{ble}. Serv^t.
good German Osnabrigs G^o. Washington.
be bought—taking eight
hundred, or one thousand Ells?

Mrs. Washington to Col. Biddle.

M^{rs}. Washingtons compliments to Col^o. Biddle—will be glad to know, if he has got the knives and forks—and wine, if it is very good and what quantity she will be very glad to see the list of the things when he has collected them altogether she begs to know if he has remembered the gin and liquers the General desires to have them sent and that they may be of the best kind—M W begs he will let M^r. Powel know when the vessel goes that the chair and coach Harness may go round with the other things they will be packed up ready for to be put on board.

Sunday one o'clock

We are much in want of perfumes such as orange flower water & for cooking.

Mrs. Washington to Col. Biddle.

Will you be so good as to get for me Beauties of Milton, Thompson, Young and Harvey.

M. Washington.

Pickled walnuts
India Mangoes
Thompson's Seasons
Gutheries Geography
Art of Speaking
6 mops or sweeping Brushes
6 clamp skrubing brushes
2 Cloths Baskets
Orange flower water
& perfumes for Cooking.

We are much in
want of mops and
clamps for scouring
Brushes—will you
get 6 of each and
two Cloths Baskets
1 larger than the
other—

Washington to Col. Biddle.

Gen. Washington's Complim^{ts}. to Col^o. Biddle—. Begs to know if the Vessel for Alexandria will sail to-day—and whether Col^o. Biddle has procured the ar-

ticles required.— If more money is wanted Col^o. Biddle will please to name the Sum—and the Gen^l. would be glad to receive the acc^t.

Sunday Morn^g.

Tobias Lear to Col. Biddle.

Mr. Lear has the pleasure to inform Col^o Biddle that he this evening received a letter from the President, dated on the Road between Alx^a. & Baltimore, in which the President observes, that the roads are so very bad that his movements must be slow & the time of his arrival in Phil^a. uncertain.— The President further observes that it is his wish & intention to come into the city without notice or Parade.—

Thursday Evening—

Washington to Col. Biddle.

[This is a *P. S.* with no date. The main body of the letter is not with it. *Ed. Penna. Mag.*]

P. S.

If you could send me samples of some of the best German Oznabr^{gs}. with the prices marked thereon, by the Ell, it would enable me to decide, whether to purchase in Philadelphia or Alexandria. I may, probably, require a thousand Ells.—

In some of the late Philadelphia Gazettes I have seen advertised a number of Passengers from Hamburgh, who are to make their own contracts.— Among these it is said there are Clerks in different Languages.— If one could be had, who was competent in English; who is master of a fair hand in English character; and who has testimonials as to his sobriety, morals & general good character—such in short as would satisfy you, were you in want of such a Person— I should be glad to contract with him on as long terms as could be

obtained, having a great deal of copying to do.— And if a complete Country blacksmith—one who knows how to make Ploughs, and all other impliments for a farm would be acceptable also. G. W——

Tobias Lear to Col. Biddle.

Mr. Lear presents his Compliments to Col^o. Biddle & informs him that the President, having taken the rout through York & Lancaster, does not expect to be in this City sooner than the middle of next week.

Saturday noon.